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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/639,658	08/15/2000	Michael R. Hansen	WEYE115753	1795

26389 7590 05/16/2003

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EXAMINER
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NGUYEN, TAN D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

DATE MAILED: 05/16/2003

#20

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/639,658

Applicant(s)

HANSEN ET AL.

Examiner

Tan Dean Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 55, 57-59, 61, 62, 64, 65 and 67-73 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 55, 57-59, 61, 62, 64-65, 67-73 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 55, 57-59, 61, 62, 64-65, 67-73 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Chmelir et al (US Patent 4,605,401).

Chmelir et al discloses a method of binding super-absorbent particles to cellulose fibers comprising the steps of: (a) providing binder-containing fiber comprising hydrogen bonding functional sites, natural fibers such as wood pulp fibers or staple fibers (cotton) or synthetic fibers, and a binder comprising a non-polymeric binder having functional groups selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl, sub-specie diol, such as polyols, glycerin (or glycerol) or glycol (col. 3, lines 30-35), (b) combining absorbent particles or super-absorbent particles

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having a hydrogen or a coordinate covalent bonding functional site with the binder-containing fiber (col. 4, lines 10-15); and (c) binding the particles to the binder-containing fiber (cols. 1-2, 3-4, 5-6). As for the new limitation that "about 1 to 40% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fibers of a non-polymeric binder", this is inherently included in the fibers of Chmelir et al after the cellulose fibers are suspended in the solvent (ethanol, other organic similar organic solvent) and filtered to remove the solvent and form a sheet. Alternatively, the use of other equivalent fibers, hydroxyl sub-specie (particular glycerol) or absorbent particle would have been obvious to a skilled artisan as mere using similar/equivalent component to obtain similar result.

As for claims 57-59, 61, 62, 64-65, 67-73, they are taught in cols. 3-11. Alternatively, the adjustment of the compositions of the components would have been obvious to meet certain particular use or product because this is taught in cols. 1-6. Also, the use of other equivalent fibers or hydroxyl sub-specie or absorbent particle would have been obvious to a skilled artisan as mere using similar component to obtain similar result.

### ***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments filed 3/5/03 are not persuasive for the following reasons:

Applicant's comment that Chmelir et al teaches a ratio of about 80 times (8,000%) excess ethanol based on the weight of the fiber and not 1-40% by weight as claimed is not persuasive because the higher ratio (8000%) is at when the cellulose are

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suspended in the ethanol solution prior to filtering to form a sheet; however, at condition when the sheet is formed after filtering and/or drying, the ratio of the binder to fibers should be inherently in the lower range of 1-40% by weight.

***Conclusion***

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

EP 376,761 A discloses a sanitary pad that has an inner layer of paper impregnated with a chemical containing glycol or glycol derivatives.

SE 9700025A discloses a treated fibers containing polymers and absorbent materials.

No claims are allowed.

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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7. Telephone inquiries regarding the status of applications or other general questions, by persons entitled to the information, should be directed to the group clerical personnel and not to the examiner. As the official records and applications are located in the clerical section of the examining Tech Center, the clerical personnel can readily provide status information without contacting the examiner. See MPEP 203.08. The Tech Center clerical receptionist number is (703) 308-1113.

In receiving an Office Action, it becomes apparent that certain documents are missing, e. g. copies of references, Forms PTO 1449, PTO-892, etc., requests for copies should be directed to Tech Center 3600 Customer Service at (703) 306-5771, or e-mail CustomerService3600@uspto.gov .

Any inquiry concerning the merits of the examination of the application should be directed to Dean Tan Nguyen at telephone number (703) 308-2053. My work schedule is normally Monday through Friday from 7:00 am through 4:30 pm.

Should I be unavailable during my normal working hours, my supervisor John Weiss may be reached at (703) 308-2702. The FAX phone numbers for formal communications concerning this application are (703) 305-7687. Informal communications may be made, following a telephone call to the examiner, by an informal FAX number to be given.

Other possibly helpful telephone numbers are:

Allowed Files & Publication	(703) 305-8322
Assignment Branch	(703) 308-9287
Certificates of Correction	(703) 305-8309
Drawing Corrections/Draftsman	(703) 305-8404/ 8335
Fee Questions	(703) 305-5125
Intellectual Property Questions	(703) 305-8217
Petitions/Special Programs	(703) 305-9282
Terminal Disclaimers	(703) 305-8408
Information Help Line	1-800-786-9199

dtn  
May 15, 2003



**DEAN T. NGUYEN**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**